



**News You Can Use  
from State Senator  
Audrey Gibson**

**2018 Legislative  
Session in Review  
Week 2**

**January 16-19, 2018**



101 E. Union Street, Suite 104 Jacksonville, FL 32202.  
(904) 359-2553

**Dear Constituent and Friend,**

Week 2 of the Legislative Session started with the Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. remembrance holiday honoring the legacy of Dr. King. It is indeed an honor to participate in various MLK events annually including the Jacksonville MLK parade hosted by the Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial Foundation, Inc., where I have the opportunity to greet so many constituents!

**In my committees this week:**

**SB 376: Workers' Compensation Benefits for First Responders:** would revise Workers' Compensation benefits for first responders to include mental stress conditions or similar non physical injuries like PTSD, suffered by law enforcement officers, firefighters, paramedics and other emergency personnel.

I believe providing mental health workers' comp benefits to those who save lives every day is really a "no-brainer." Their experiences on the front lines in communities - whether a murder, gunshot victim, stabbing, car accident, fire, or freak accident - are tragically similar to those on the front lines in situations of war time. The constant exposure to trauma and despair take a heavy toll on these individuals and their families. Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), for example, is a common disorder that we now recognize and know what the consequences can be without help. The evidence of its impact is both "clear" and "convincing," and in my opinion, benefits for those similarly affected should be awarded based on this standard rather than a standard that is slanted towards constant denial of benefits. Additionally, I believe that every emergency personnel department needs and should have dedicated units for mental health debriefings and assistance.

This bill is a critical first step in getting the benefits for those who stand first in line to help us, have earned. I was happy to support the legislation, which now moves to its next committee stop for a hearing.

**SB 328: Veteran Identification:** directs the Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles (DHSMV) to create a state veteran identification card to be used by veterans as proof of veteran status for obtaining discounts or fee waivers while protecting confidential information. Under the bill the department is to issue the card to a veteran who has been honorably discharged and who provides to the DHSMV a copy of their DD Form 214, a valid driver license, identification card, or another form of photographic identification acceptable to the DHSMV, and payment of a \$10 fee. The bill received my yes vote!

**SB 204: Land Acquisition Trust Fund:** will increase funding by \$50 million for springs restoration, protection, and management projects, and help to continually improve the health of our beloved St. Johns River. The efforts contained in the legislation are part of the implementation of the constitutional amendment that overwhelming passed in our state to ensure the priority of water and land conservation and restoration projects. Now heading to the floor, the bill keeps the promise to the people of the state of Florida.

**Snapshots:**



**With Councilman Garrett Dennis and Representative Tracie Davis at  
The Baptist Ministers Conference of Duval and Adjacent Counties  
MLK Breakfast**



**MLK Holiday Grand Parade 2018 with Sorors of  
Delta Sigma Theta Sorority Inc. Jacksonville Alumni Chapter**



**"Selfie" with members of Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity, Inc. at  
MLK Holiday Grand Parade 2018**



**MLK Holiday Grand Parade 2018 with members of  
Zeta Phi Beta Sorority, Inc. and Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Inc.**



**Thank you for serving in the Senate this week as a "Page"  
Bre'Onna Brewer of Jacksonville, FL**

As we continue through Session, I will keep you informed on various issues. If you have questions or comments please do not hesitate to contact my office.

**As always, it is an Honor and a Pleasure to serve you in the Florida Senate!**

Sincerely,

*Audrey*

Audrey Gibson  
State Senator  
District 6

Tune into these stations between 6 am-6 pm Mon to Fri to watch legislative action: <http://www.flsenate.gov/offices/minority> or WJCT-TV-Comcast channel 212, or WJCT-DT 7.4 or WUFT-TV-Comcast channel 210, Digital Channel 5.2 or Cox 13.